

Daily Herald, April 12, 2005

The anti-gang operation Waukegan police put on display recently for U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk continues to bear fruit.

Kirk joined officers March 30 as they raided a pair of homes connected to rival gang members suspected in a series of drive-by shootings of houses and cars.

Three guns and a quantity of marijuana were seized by police while Kirk was on hand, but the arrests continued after the congressman moved on.

Officers were watching a house in Zion believed to be home to several gang members April 1 when they saw a number of weapons being loaded into two cars.

They stopped the vehicles as they were being driven into Waukegan and confiscated a sawed-off shotgun and a .38-caliber handgun.

Sgt. Dominic Cappelluti said all of the weapons seized in the operation were stolen and many had their serial numbers scratched off.

Kirk's observation of the operation was part of his preparation for the awarding of up to \$250 million in anti-gun funding Congress is set to appropriate in next year's federal budget.

As much as \$1 million of that money could be spent in Kirk's 10th Congressional District, he said.

Those arrested thus far in the operation include Alexis Berrios, 22, of 1921 S. Lewis Ave.; Jason Neukom, 19, 135 Montesano St.; Joseph Morales, 18, 132 S. Park St., all in Waukegan; Jesus Rivera, 17, 13412 W. Tyler Ave. in Gurnee and a 16-year-old juvenile male from Zion.

All are being held on a variety of weapons charges and are due to appear in court again April 25.

Hartel dies: Former Associate Judge Harry Hartel of Mundelein died two weeks ago at the age of 68. Hartel, who was appointed an associate judge in 1973 and retired in 1995, was born in Chicago and graduated from the University of Illinois.

He served as a captain in the U.S. Army's Judge Advocate Corps during the Korean War. In his 22 years on the bench, Hartel served in every court division.

Bernard Wysocki, president of the Lake County Bar Association, said Hartel brought "a quiet dignity" to the bench. "Judge Hartel always tried to find a win-win situation for the passionate parties who appeared before him," Wysocki said. "He was someone who had no ego and, like so many of his generation, just gave of himself to his job and community."

Contract recommended: The county board's law and judicial committee recommended last week that the full board approve a contract between the sheriff's office and the Fox Waterway Agency for marine patrols during the upcoming boating season.

The contract calls for a 2.63 percent increase in the fee the agency will pay the sheriff, from \$38,000 last year to \$39,000.

Agency Chairman Howard Scott asked the committee to renew the contract at last year's cost, saying the extra \$1,000 would severely strain his limited budget.

The committee, however, decided to go ahead with the price increase after County

Administrator Barry Burton pointed out the entire budget for the sheriff's marine patrol has increased from \$206,000 in 1994 to \$460,000 this year.

Patrols on the Chain O' Lakes are expected to take place between the first weekend in May and mid October.